WORLD OF WARCRAFT®

SHADOW WING™

THE DRAGONS OF OUTLAND

VOLUME ONE

RICHARD A. KNAAK • JAE-HWAN KIM

World Of Warcraft: Shadow Wing Vol. 1

Story by: Richard A. Knaak
Art by: Jae-Hwan Kim

Retouch Artist, Layout & Lettering - Michael Paolilli
Creative Consultant - Michael Paolilli
Cover Designer - Louis Csontos
Cover Artist - Jae-Hwan Kim
Cover Art Retouch - Michael Paolilli

BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT

Senior Vice President, Creative Development - Chris Metzen
Lead Developer, Licensed Products - Mike Hummel
Publishing Lead, Creative Development - Micky Neilson
Senior Story Developer - James Waugh
Art Director - Glenn Rane
Licensing Manager - Jason Bischoff
Historian - Evelyn Fredericksen
Additional Development - Samwise Didier, Cameron Dayton and Tommy Newcomer

CRYPTOZOIC™
ENTERTAINMENT
Cryptozoic Entertainment
16279 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

www.cryptozoic.com

© 2011 Blizzard Entertainment, Inc.
All rights reserved. StarCraft is a registered trademark and Blizzard Entertainment are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Blizzard Entertainment, Inc., in the U.S. and/or other countries.

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders. This manga is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

VOLUME ONE

THE DRAGONS OF OUTLAND

STORY BY
RICHARD A. KNAAK

ART BY
JAE-HWAN KIM

WORLD OF WARCRAFT®

SHADOW WING™

CHAPTER ONE 5

CHAPTER TWO 33

CHAPTER THREE 59

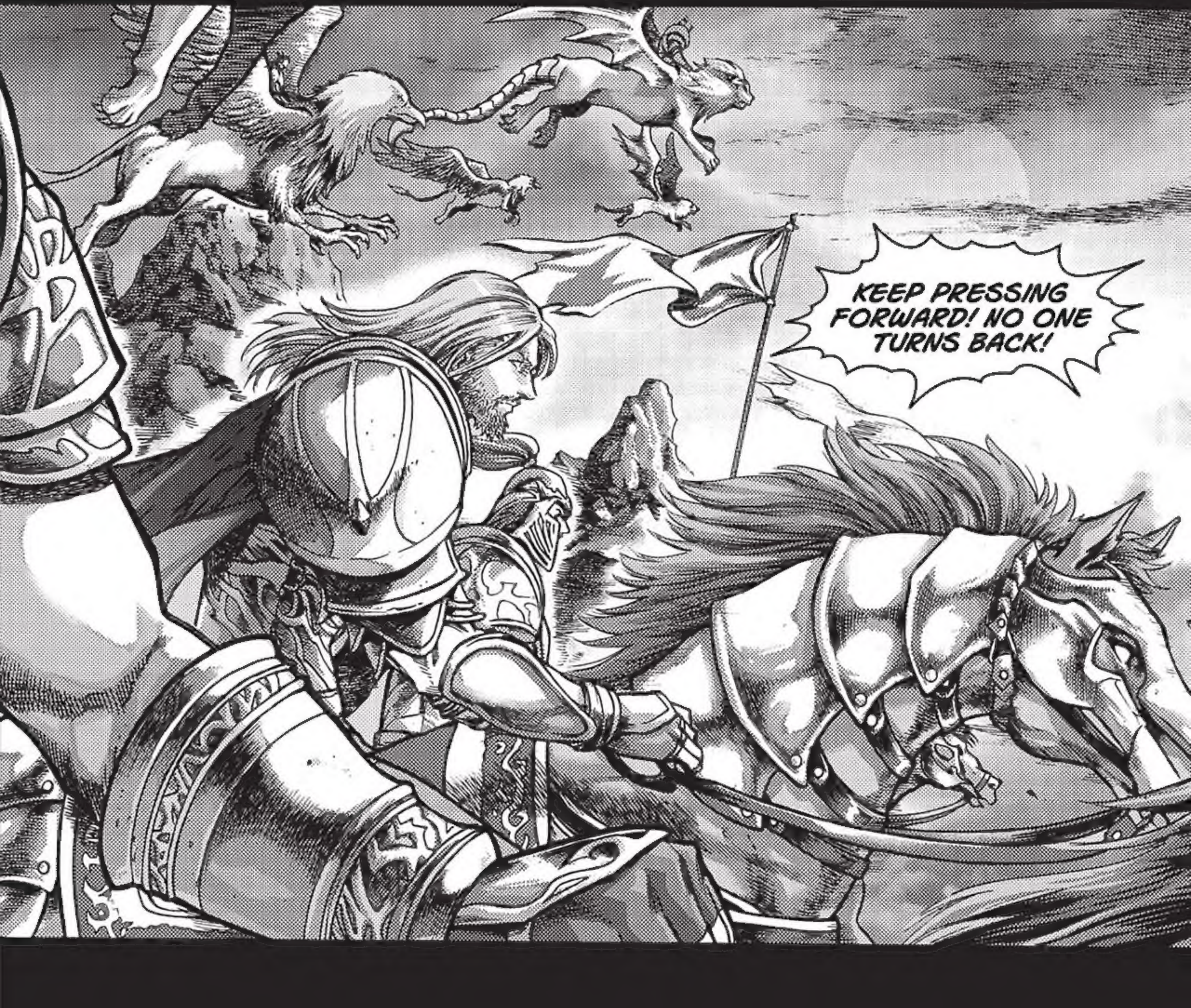
CHAPTER FOUR 85

CHAPTER FIVE 111

CHAPTER SIX 137

CHAPTER ONE

HERE THERE BE DEMONS



Demons had come again to the world of Azeroth...the demons of the Burning Legion.

They had desired nothing less than the extinction of all life...and they had nearly succeeded.

But in the end, they had been vanquished, though their terrible legacy would live on...

Yet, the victors dared not rest, instead pursuing their retreating foe even beyond Azeroth...

...AND INTO A REALM AS VAUNTING, TO THE SOUL AS THEIR HORRIFIC ADVERSARIES HAD FIRST BEEN...

A REALM CALLED OUTLAND.

For some time, the cost in blood remained high.

But the Alliance and Horde were relentless in their pursuit...

...and, at last, there came some respite...a pause between the still-savage waves of demons.

IF NOT FOR EVERYONE, THOUGH...

GATHER AROUND!

THOUGH THE ENEMY HAS FALLEN BEFORE US, WE CANNOT GROW COMPLACENT!

THE IMMEDIATE AREA MUST BE SECURED AND SCOUTS SENT OUT TO FURTHER INVESTIGATE THIS REDISCOVERED LAND...

YOU THREE! GATHER PROVISIONS TOGETHER AND--

MY LORD! I WOULD VOLUNTEER!

JORAD MACE! I GRANTED YOUR PLEA TO MAKE AMENDS FOR YOUR PAST FAILURES BY ALLOWING YOU A PLACE AMONG US IN THIS EXPEDITION...

BUT THOUGH YOU'VE SERVED ADEQUATELY IN BATTLE, I AM STILL TAKING YOUR MEASURE!

NOW STAND DOWN AND LET THESE OTHERS--

NO!

FORGIVE ME, MY LORD TRUEBLADE, BUT I MUST SPEAK!

I CAN NEVER TRULY REDEEM MYSELF IF I MUST ALWAYS WAIT WHILE OTHERS TAKE THE RISK!

I AM A PALADIN OF THE SILVER HAND! LET ME PROVE THAT BY BEING TRUSTED IN ALL THINGS! LET ME BE ONE OF THOSE WHO SCOUTS THIS STRANGE AND DEADLY REALM...

HMMPH...

PERHAPS THERE'S SOMETHING IN WHAT YOU SAY...

BUT NOW IS NOT THE TIME! YOU'LL HAVE A TASK WORTHY OF A PALADIN...

I WANT YOU TO ASSIST THE OTHERS IN BUILDING FORTIFICATIONS... THERE.

AS...AS YOU COMMAND, LORD TRUEBLADE.

THERE IS NO SIMPLE PATH TO REDEMPTION, JORAD MACE... BUT THERE IS A PATH NONETHELESS. PATIENCE IS NOT A VIRTUE YOU'VE NURTURED, BUT YOU'LL LEARN...EVENTUALLY...

Lord Irulon Trueblade's words did little to assuage Jorad as he began what he harply considered a heroic, albeit essential, undertaking.

But then Fate chose to enter the fray, as, on one hand, a shadowed group slowly moved to meet the Alliance...

...and, on the other, a messenger arrived with news of import.

LORD TRUEBLADE! WHERE IS HE? I'VE WORD TO PASS ON TO HIM AND QUICKLY!

HE HAS STEPPED AWAY! LET ME GET HIM--

THERE IS NO TIME! I MUST CONTINUE ON WITH OTHER MESSAGES! YOU MUST RELAY THIS ONE TO HIM!

LORD DURON, ALLIANCE COMMANDER, NEEDS A SCOUT SENT IMMEDIATELY TO HONOR HOLD TO ALERT THEM TO OUR PRESENCE AND COORDINATE STRATEGY! IT IS IMPERATIVE THIS BE DONE IMMEDIATELY! THE DEMONS ARE ALREADY REGROUPING!

The messenger rode off again before Jorad could stop him.

Trying to obey, Jorad looked for Trueblade...but the lead paladin was now one among thousands...

...and Honor Hold, only just hours earlier discovered to have survived the cataclysm that had torn this world--once called Draenor--apart, had to be contacted as soon as possible.

Jorad was aware that he faced permanent ouster from the paladins of the Silver Hand for what he planned...

...but he was a fighter, with a duty to his fellows.

And with time clearly of the essence, with the Burning Legion preparing to strike again...

...someone had to reach Honor Hold...

Yet, as he flew, Jorad was well aware that he also sought not only to aid the cause, but to rid himself of his past shame.

And, especially, the bitterness concerning his failure to slay his traitorous lord...Arthas...

...the same bitterness which had, since that time, also kept him estranged from the glory of the Light.

It had taken months to come to grips with that horrific failure, months more to find the opportunity to perhaps remedy the foul situation...

In that time, he had also befriended others...

...and found some redemption in aiding their own cause...

...even if without being able to summon the Light.

...AND UTTERLY UNATTAINABLE FOR A MERE MORTAL, MUCH LESS ONE OF SUCH DUBIOUS COURAGE AND ABILITY.

HE HAD ALSO FOUND SOMETHING ELSE, SOMETHING ASTOUNDING...

WHAT PASSED FOR DAY IN OUTLAND TRANSFORMED INTO "NIGHT" AS JORAD USED HIS MISSION TO BURY THOSE MEMORIES AGAIN.

AS A PALADIN OF THE SILVER HAND, HE HAD LEARNED ABOUT HONOR HOLD, AN ALLIANCE OUTPOST CREATED DURING A PREVIOUS INCURSION INTO THIS REALM.

THE GREAT GENERAL TURALYON--A FELLOW PALADIN--AND THE SONS OF LOTHAR HAD FOUNDED IT.

THERE SHOULD BE NO ALLIANCE FORCES THIS FAR OUT...THOSE OF THE EARLIER EXPEDITIONS WERE ALL RECALLED LONG AGO...AND I AM NOT YET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HONOR HOLD...

AND HE LOOKS TO BE FROM OUR OWN EXPEDITION...

AS, INDEED, JORAD VERIFIED TOO LATE, HE ONCE HAD BEEN...

Suddenly...

A DEMON OF THE BURNING LEGION...

...WITH FRIENDS!

When word of Honor Hold's rediscovery had come, it had also included warnings of demons deployed around the region.

Demons set to thwart any runners seeking to ward the hold of both the Legion's regrouping and preparations for a new attack.

But they had made a mistake in thinking to so easily take Jorad.

THWUMP

AAAAH!!

UMPH!

THWAM

NA!!

OOOF

!!!

?!

REEEYAH!!

KRUNCH

THWAP!

UNGH!

THUMP

:GASP:

BY THE-- BUT *HOW?!*

NO...

WELL...NOT THE *WELCOME* I MIGHT'VE EXPECTED. AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE ME?

TYRI...

She was not an elf of any sort, though she looked like one of the most beautiful...no, Tyri was much, much more than that...

WE PARTED WAYS LONG AGO...YOU CANNOT BE HERE...

And the fact that the paladin knew just who she actually was still did not keep his heart from secretly pounding from joy at sight of her.

OH, I'M VERY REAL! I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT I'D SEE *YOU* AGAIN, EVEN WHEN I DECIDED TO JOIN THE COLUMN AS ONE OF THE HIGH ELVEN CONTINGENT.

IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN I CAUGHT SIGHT OF YOU JUST BEFORE WE MANAGED TO CROSS OVER INTO THIS PLACE.

YES...SUCH AN AMAZING COINCIDENCE...TO FIND YOU AMONG US..

When they had last parted, she had intended to return to her kind. He had expected never to see her again, for humans and her like rarely mixed...and when they did it was generally not as friends...or more...

THAT PART IS HARDLY COINCIDENCE...I JOINED THE STRUGGLE THE MOMENT I SENSED EVERYONE HEADING TOWARD THE PORTAL!

I *HAD* TO JOURNEY HERE...I *HAD* TO COME TO THIS PLACE...

YOU..*HAD*...TO COME TO THIS PLACE?

Jorad continued to hide his disappointment. Of course she was not here because of him.

But as a paladin, a defender of Azeroth, her last words now seized full his attention...

YOU'RE A HUMAN--AND MOST WIZARDS WOULD NOT EVEN SENSE IT...BUT MY KIND...YOU KNOW HOW ATTUNED WE ARE TO ALL THINGS MAGIC....

IT ALL BUT *CALLED* TO ME...AND WAS SO DIFFERENT, AND YET SO FAMILIAR THAT I COULDN'T HELP BUT PURSUE THE TRUTH.

AND SO YOU FOLLOWED ME OUT...

NO...YOU JUST HAPPENED TO BE GOING THE SAME DIRECTION... FORTUNATELY FOR YOU, I MIGHT ADD.

BUT YOU'RE WITHOUT A MOUNT NOW.

I WILL CONTINUE ON FOOT TO HONOR HOLD. IT IS NOTHING...

ON *FOOT?*

NONSENSE! I'VE NOT SAVED YOU TO LET YOU WANDER THIS REALM ALONE AND LIKELY NEXT TIME GET YOURSELF KILLED...

AND WHY TRAVEL ON FOOT--

--WHEN, SINCE WE ARE HEADED IN THE SAME DIRECTION, I CAN OFFER A MUCH, MUCH MORE *PRACTICAL* MANNER?

DON'T YOU AGREE?

YOU'LL REACH HONOR HOLD MUCH QUICKER THIS WAY...AND I CAN GO ON WITH MY OWN SEARCH.

AS YOU SAY

AS I SAY YES...

NOW HOLD TIGHT!

The sensation of flying by dragon thrilled Joran even more than flying by mere gryphon...

...but reminded him once again at the striking differences between Tyri and him.

She was a blue dragon, one of those who served Malygos, the Aspect of magic. Her life was measured in millennia, not years.

Tyri--or Tyrygosa, as she was truly known--had been fated to choose as her mate another blue...Kaleegos...

But Kaleegos--Kalec--had chosen to stay with Anveena, who, despite her seemingly very human guise, had proven to be more astounding a being than even the dragons...

YOU INTENDED TO SEEK OUT YOUR TRAITOROUS LORD ARTHAS...I EVEN ONCE OFFERED TO FLY YOU AS NEAR AS I COULD...

WHAT BECAME OF THAT?

REASON CAME OF IT... I WOULD ONLY BE FLINGING MYSELF INTO DEATH'S ARMS...OR, WORSE, JOINING MY COMRADES IN SERVING AS AN UNDEAD.

I HAVE NOT COMPLETELY SURRENDERED ON THE SUBJECT...BUT IF I FACE HIM, I WILL DO SO WHEN THERE IS AT LEAST A SLIGHT HOPE.

IN THE MEANTIME, I SEEK TO REGAIN MY HONOR--AND MY WORTHINESS TO THE LIGHT--BY SERVING MY ORDER AS BEST I CAN...

'AS BEST YOU CAN'? THERE WAS NOT ONE PALADIN AMONG YOUR RANKS WHO FOUGHT HARDER AT THE PORTAL...AND WITHOUT WIELDING THE LIGHT, NO LESS!

YOU STOOD FIGHTING WHERE NOT EVEN YOUR LEADER COULD! I THINK YOUR HONOR'S RESTORED, JORAD MACE...

Jorad did not reply to her comment, but a very slight smile briefly crossed his generally dour face.

Tyri had witnessed him in battle, that despite her initial indication that she had paid little mind to his presence until they had crossed into Outland...

Unwilling to let silence come between them, the paladin chose a different and far safer subject... not to mention one that might be of interest to his own kind.

THIS SENSATION... MAGICAL ESSENCE...

DON'T WORRY YOURSELF SEEKING A NAME FOR IT! CALL IT A DISTURBANCE AND LEAVE IT AT THAT.

AS YOU SAY! YOU SPOKE OF IT BEING FAMILIAR, YET NOT! FAMILIAR IN WHAT WAY?

I FEEL AS IF I KNOW IT AS WELL AS I KNOW MYSELF...AND YET IT TOUCHES ME AS NOTHING HAS...

HAVE OTHERS OF YOUR KIND NOTED IT?

I DIDN'T HAVE THE CHANCE TO FIND OUT...THERE WAS A...AN URGENCY TO IT. I HAD TO FOLLOW IT TO ITS ORIGIN BEFORE IT WOULD BE FOREVER LOST...

AN *URGENCY*? FOREVER LOST? WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY--

RRRRAUGH!!!

SHRAAAK

TYR!!!!

THE AGONY-- IT'S DRAWING ITS POWER **FROM** ME TO USE **AGAINST** ME! I CAN'T--

TYR!!!!

I-I'LL TRY TO SLOW ENOUGH--UNGH! B-BE PREPARED TO JUMP!!

I'LL NOT LEAVE YOU!!

THEN YOU'LL DIE A-AND FAIL! DO--DO AS I COMMAND!!

JORAD KNEW SHE WAS RIGHT. THAT HE HAD TO TRY TO LEAP TO SAFETY IF SHE COULD HELP HIM DO SO...

BUT EVEN THEN, IT WAS VERY QUESTIONABLE IF HE WOULD SURVIVE.

MOOM

FWOOOP

TWAMMMM

KRACKLE

KRACKLE

KRACKLE

DID I NOT PROMISE YOU, MY FRIEND...A *PERFECT CATCH.*

A PERFECT CATCH, ETHEREAL? THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS BEAST.

SOMETHING VERY, VERY DIFFERENT...

CHAPTER TWO

ODTLAND'S CHILDREN

I AM ANGAN ERTHAN TO SPEAK FOR ALL HERE. WE ARE THE DRAGENE! AND WE COME TO OFFER PEACE AND GUIDANCE IN THIS, THE REALM WE CALL OUTLAND...

BUT MOST OF ALL, WE OFFER OUR MIGHT AGAINST OUR COMMON FOES...

THE WAR HAS BEEN LONG...AND NOW WE ENTER THIS STRANGE REALM! YOUR ADDITIONAL MIGHT IS WELCOME ENOUGH, BUT IF YOU KNOW THIS--THIS OUTLAND--AS YOU SAY, YOUR GUIDANCE WOULD BE MOST WELCOME.

ALL THAT WE CAN OFFER, WE GLADLY GIVE...IF IT MEANS AT LAST THE END TO THE DEMONS OF THE *BURNING CRUSADE*.

THEN, I, DURON, AS COMMANDER OF THIS EXPEDITION, GLADLY ACCEPT YOUR OFFER!

A moment of history...

A moment of change...

But one that goes unnoticed by Jorad or his companion.

RRRRRARRGH!!

THUMP

UUUUUNGH!

AAAAARGH!!

SCRRRAAPP

UNGH...

BIND THIS ONE AND THE BEAST... BEFORE THEIR FRIENDS THE DRAENEI COME FOR THEM...

WE SHOULD CUT THEM! THEY WILL ONLY BRING THE WRATH OF THE UNAFFECTED DOWN ON US!

NO...THERE IS POSSIBLE NEED FOR THIS ONE, IF ONLY TO KEEP THE BEAST UNDER CONTROL...AND I WANT IT UNDER CONTROL...

IT HAS MAGIC... AND PERHAPS WE CAN USE IT FOR OUR *REDEMPTION*...

WE...WE MEAN NO HARM...

I STILL CANNOT WIELD THE LIGHT, NOT EVEN NOW WHEN I MOST NEED IT...I AM HELPLESS...

POINT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT DOES IS THAT YOU ARE FRIENDS OF THE UNAFFECTED

WHAT_ WHAT ARE THE "UNAFFECTED"?

THEY ARE THE DRAENEI... WHAT OUR ANCESTORS ONCE WERE.

BEFORE THE SICKNESS TWISTED US TO THIS_

YOUR FRIENDS... THEY CALL US THE *KROKUL* IN OUR OLD TONGUE..*BROKEN*_

BUT WE ARE NOT LIKE THE LOST ONES, WHO ARE BEYOND SAVING. WE ARE DRAENEI STILL.

AND PERHAPS WE WILL BE CURED...IF THE MAGIC IS POWERFUL ENOUGH...

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MEAN...

THE BEAST RADIATES A MAGIC LIKE NONE WE HAVE EXPERIENCED...

IT MAY BE THAT--

'WARE, WARRITH! THE "SHADOWS" COME!

LEAVE THEM! FLEE!

SEE HOW THEY SCATTER, VALOKU?

SHALL WE HUNT THEM, VALOKU? THEY LOOK LIKE FUN!

LEAVE THEM BE, ZZERAKU! I WANT TO SEE THIS OTHER, THE ONE LIKE US!

OOOMPH!

FWOOSH

G-GREETINGS. MY FRIENDS! MY NAME IS TYRYGOSA. I HAD NOT EXPECTED TO MEET OTHER DRAGONS HERE...

YOU ARE NOT LIKE US...YOU WOULD HUNT US...WE SHOULD HUNT YOU FIRST!

NO! MAYBE SHE CAN TELL US WHAT WE WANT! MAYBE SHE KNOWS US!

SHE IS DIFFERENT! SHE WILL HUNT US! WE ATTACK HER FIRST!

SHE MAY KNOW US! SHE MAY HELP US!

FWWWOOOSHHHH

HUNT HER!

HELP HER!

HHHISSSS!!

RRRROOOARRRR!!

KRAKKLE

KRAKKLE

ZZZZZT

NEVER HAVE I SEEN SUCH DRAGONS-- AND YET--THERE IS SOMETHING FAMILIAR IN THEIR AURAS!

BUT IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAT I FIRST SEE JORAD TO SAFETY--

WHERE IS HE?

RELEASE ME! WE ARE NO THREAT!!

RELEASE ME! SHE NEEDS ME!

SILENCE HIM BEFORE HIS SHOUTING BRINGS THE NETHER DRAGONS UPON US!

MMMPH!!

RRROOARR

HISSSS

TYRI..

I HAVE FAILED YOU..

KRACKLE

RRROOOAR!!

HISSSS!!

KRACKLE

SSSSST

THEY'RE PURE MAGICAL ENERGY, NOT FLESH...

I MUST STOP THEM BEFORE THEY DESTROY EACH OTHER AND ALL THAT IS AROUND THEM...

HEAR ME! CEASE THIS BICKERING NOW!

HMMPH!! PERHAPS I NEED TO BE A BIT MORE INSISTENT!

STOP!!

FWISSSSSH

THEY'RE LIKE CHILDREN... DANGEROUS CHILDREN...

I MUST FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THEM...

NOW, THERE IS NO NEED FOR US TO FIGHT, IS THERE? WE SHOULD ALL BE FRIENDS...

NO...NO NEED TO FIGHT...

FRIENDS...YES... WE SHOULD BE FRIENDS...

THEY'RE EVEN MORE LIKE CHILDREN THAN I THOUGHT!

NOW, FIRST THE CREATURES YOU SCARED AWAY...THERE WAS ONE DIFFERENT FROM THE REST... ANOTHER FRIEND...

THE BROKEN... THEY TOOK HIM...

TO THE HILLS...

SHOW ME WHERE! NOW!

THIS WAY...

THIS WAY...

THEY'RE LIKE DEADLY CHILDREN

BUT HOW DID THEY COME TO BE?

AND WHY IS THERE SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THEM?

A BLUE DRAGON... A GUARDIAN OF MAGIC...

MORE THAN YOUR PRECIOUS DEVICE COULD HANDLE, KADAVAN!

YOU WISHED TO CATCH NETHER DRAGONS, MY FRIEND...I GUARANTEED THAT.

BUT THIS WAS NO NETHER DRAGON...

...NO.

IN SOME WAYS, THIS WAS EVEN MORE...

BLUE DRAGONS ARE THE KEEPERS OF MAGIC...THEY WIELD IT LIKE NO OTHER...

WITH THE POWER OF A BLUE DRAGON AT MY BECK AND CALL...

IT COULD BE DONE...

FOR A PRICE... AS USUAL?

AS USUAL, MY FRIEND... IN THE MEANTIME, DO YOU WISH ME TO REPAIR THE ORIGINAL CAPTURE DEVICE?

OF COURSE! I STILL NEED THE NETHER DRAGONS! ALL OF THEM, EVENTUALLY! THEY'LL BE THE VANGUARD OF MY FORCE...

AGAINST SUCH MIGHT, EVEN THE SO-CALLED LORD OF OUTLAND WILL FALL.

ILLIDAN THE BETRAYER AND HIS BLACK TEMPLE WILL BE NO MORE...AND THIS REALM WILL CALL RAGNOK BLOODREAVER MASTER!

AND PERHAPS, AFTER THAT, OTHER REALMS SHALL AS WELL...

WORTHY PLANS FOR A WORTHY CONQUEROR...

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO OBTAIN A DEVICE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO ENSNARE THE BLUE?

WHY...NOT SO LONG AT ALL... I HAVE AN ITEM THAT SHOULD WORK...

BUT IT IS ONE OF A KIND... YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE NOT TO LOSE OR ABUSE IT.

GET IT, THEN...AND QUICKLY! THE BLUE WILL RETURN AND SOON! SHE LOOKS TO BE A VERY INQUISITIVE ONE...

AND I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT SHE'LL BE SEEKING THE TRUTH CONCERNING THE NETHER DRAGONS...

...A TRUTH SHE CERTAINLY WON'T LIKE.

MMMPH

I MUST HAVE PASSED OUT.

AND CLEARLY MY SITUATION HAS ONLY WORSENED.

MMMPH!

MMMPH!

THIS WAS UNWISE! WE...WE SHOULD HAVE LEFT HIM FOR THE BEASTS!

YOU ARE MY SON, VALWAR...BUT I MAKE THE DECISIONS.

WE ARE SAFE FROM THE BEASTS. LET HIM SPEAK

I TELL YOU AGAIN! WE ARE *NOT* ENEMIES!

YOU MUST *RELEASE ME!* SHE MAY NEED MY HELP!

NOT ENEMIES? YOUR PEOPLE MEET EVEN NOW WITH THE UNAFFECTED, THEY WHO CLAIM TO WELCOME US BACK...BUT *LIE!*

I KNOW *NOT* OF WHAT YOU SPEAK! PLEASE! SHE IS IN *DANGER!*

YOU TALK OF THE BLUE ONE? IF THAT GIANT IS A FRIEND OF YOURS, IT IS TOO LATE!

SHE CANNOT STAND AGAINST THE NETHER DRAGONS

AND EVEN IF SHE SHOULD SURVIVE THEM...

IT WILL LIKELY ONLY BE TO SUFFER A *WORSE* FATE

CHAPTER THREE

TREACHERY

WHAT A STRANGE REALM THIS IS...

A TRAGIC, SHATTERED WORLD STILL FILLED WITH LIFE...

TO THINK THAT THIS WAS ONCE PART OF THE HOMEWORLD OF THE [illegible]

A WILD, BRUTAL PLACE WHERE CORRUPTION BY DEMONS FIRST ALTERED THE BROWN-SKINNED ORCS INTO A FETID GREEN, MONSTROUS EVIL...

A WORLD TIED [illegible] DARK PORTAL

BLUE DRAGONS--MASTERS
THEORIZED WAS RENT BY
SOME GREAT MAGICAL

IT IS AMAZING THAT ANY PORTION OF THE WORLD SURVIVED...

BUT WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED THAT ARCANE ENERGIES WOULD KEEP THIS FRAGMENT NOT ONLY INTACT

...BUT VIABLE FOR EXISTENCE...

...IF BARELY.

AND SOMEWHERE DOWN THERE IS JORAD...

THEY COULD NOT HAVE GOTTEN FAR! ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT YOU KNOW WHERE THE BROKEN MIGHT BE?

THIS IS WHERE THEY GO! THIS IS WHERE THEY ALWAYS GO!

THIS IS WHERE WE HUNT THEM...

THAT ONE...ZZERAKU... STRIKES ME AS A BIT MORE CLEVER...AND THUS POSSIBLY MORE DANGEROUS.

HE WILL BEAR SOME WATCHING...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "A WORSE FATE"? TELL ME!

SOMETHING HAS BEEN TAKING THE BEASTS...THEY...THEY ARE NOT SEEN AGAIN.

AND GOOD RIDDANCE TO THEM...TO THEM *AND* HER! BETTER THAT THAN HAVING THEM CONSTANTLY HUNT US DOWN AS PREY!

MY SON, VALWAR, FAILS TO SEE FURTHER.

THAT WHAT TAKES THE BEASTS MAY NEXT TAKE US.

THEN, YOU MUST HELP ME FIND HER! SHE IS NOT LIKE THE DRAGONS OF THIS REALM! SHE WILL WANT TO HELP YOU...I SWEAR IT!

HMMM...

I HAVE SEEN YOUR RACE...THEY FOUGHT WITH COURAGE...AND *HONOR.*

UNBIND HIM.

FATHER! I PROTEST! YOU CANNOT JUST *LET HIM GO!!*

AND I...AM NOT.

UNBOUND YOU WILL BE...BUT YOU ARE *NOT* TO GO *FREE.*

WE SHALL SEE IF YOU TELL THE TRUTH...IN THE ONLY WAY POSSIBLE.

I WILL PROVE MYSELF TO YOU. JUST TELL ME *HOW.*

BY *FACING* THE *BEASTS.*

WE PASSED THIS SPOT ALREADY! ARE YOU CERTAIN THIS IS THE RIGHT WAY?

THEY ARE HERE! CAN'T YOU SMELL THEM?

WELL, ZZERAKU? WHAT DO YOU SAY?

THEY ARE! YOU CAN SMELL THEM IF YOU FLY MUCH LOWER...

LOWER?

PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT...WHY DO YOU NOT LEAD THE WAY, ZZERAKU?

YES...

HE ACTED AS IF HE WAS UP TO SOMETHING... BUT I SEE NOTHING...

HMMM... WHAT CAN'T WOULD HE HAVE HAD TO FOOL ME, ANYWAY? IT'S AS I THOUGHT. THEY'RE CHILDREN...

THAT LOOKS AS IF IT MIGHT BE JORAD AND HIS CAPTORS! ZZERAKU APPARENTLY KNEW BETTER THAN TO TRY TO TRICK ME...

BEWARE! THEY ARE FLYING THROUGH AN UNSTABLE, VOLATILE AREA!

THE NETHER DRAGONS SHOULD KNOW THAT!

I MUST WARN HER! *MY LADY! BEWARE THE GROUND!*

ONE OF THEM IS COMING TOWARD US! I CAN'T TELL IF IT'S HIM, THOUGH...!

A LITTLE LOWER AND THE WIND WILL BRING THE SCENT BETTER TO US--

NO! THAT IS NOT TRUE!

YES IT IS!

NO! YOU LIE TO HER!

ROUMBLE

STOP IT, BOTH OF YOU! ZZERAKU! WHAT ARE YOU UP--

UNGH!

FWOOSH

HA! SHE THOUGHT SHE WAS SO SMART!

AAARGH!!

WE ARE SMARTER! I AM SMARTER!

NO! SHE'S OUR NEW FRIEND!

RRROAR!

HISSS!

NNNNNGH...

SHE HURT ME!

NEVER MATCH MAGIC WITH A BLUE DRAGON...

SHE WAS OUR NEW FRIEND AND YOU HURT HER!

SHE WANTS TO MAKE US LIKE THE OTHERS!

"OTHERS"? WHAT DOES HE MEAN?

ZZERAKU! WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "THE OTHERS"?

ZZERAKU! COME BACK!

NO! YOU WILL NOT CATCH ME!

VALOKU! LEAVE HIM!

I'VE GOT TO FOLLOW THEM! BUT...

BUT NO...IF THAT IS JORAD, I CAN'T LEAVE HIM TO THOSE OTHER CREATURES...

RELEASE HIM! RELEASE HIM OR FACE MY WRATH!

NAY, MY LADY! THEY MEAN NO HARM! 'TIS A MISUNDERSTANDING!

"MISUNDERSTANDING"? THEN, STEP AWAY FROM THEM TO PROVE IT...IF THEY DARE LET YOU!!

DO NOT LET HIM GO! SHE WILL *KILL US ALL!*

I GIVE YOU MY SOLEMN WORD! SHE WILL NOT HARM ANYONE!

VERY WELL

YOU WILL SEE

I HAD FEARED YOU LOST, MY LADY

DON'T CALL ME THAT!

YOU KNOW I PREFER "TYRI"...

I AM GLAD YOU ARE SAFE! WHEN I SAW THOSE--THOSE OTHER DRAGONS--

WE'LL TALK OF THEM IN A MOMENT! WHAT OF THESE CREATURES?

A MISUNDERSTANDING! NOTHING MORE! I HAVE SWORN TO THEM THAT WE MEAN NO HARM...!

NEVER MAKE SUCH *OATHS* ON MY BEHALF.

FORGIVE ME, MY LA--ER, TYR! I DID NOT MEAN TO OVERSTEP MYSELF, BUT--

BUT HE ACTED AS *NECESSARY*. IF THERE IS FAULT...IT IS *OURS*.

IF THE PALADIN SPEAKS FOR YOU, I'VE NO QUARREL...

...SO LONG AS YOUR PEOPLE AGREE WITH THAT, TOO.

I, WARRITH, SPEAK FOR MY PEOPLE, AND I SAY THAT WE ARE *NOT* ENEMIES.

IS THAT NOT...SO, VALWAR, MY SON?

YES...FATHER...

YOU...YOU ARE NOT INJURED FROM THE FLAMES?

HMMPH! *HARDLY!*

I THINK ZZERAKU MEANT IT MORE TO DISTRACT ME FROM HIS OWN ATTACK...

...WHICH I FELL FOR, DESPITE MY WARINESS, LIKE A NEW HATCHLING!

BUT VALOKU... HE TRIED TO HELP ME.

SUCH CHILDREN... BOTH OF THEM, DESPITE THEIR POWER AND INTELLIGENCE.

BUT WITHOUT ANY SENSE OF TRUE DIRECTION OR PURPOSE... LIKE...LIKE...

LIKE WHO?

NOTHING... NO ONE...

WARRITH, YOU FEAR FOR YOUR PEOPLE WHERE THEIR KIND IS CONCERNED, DON'T YOU?

THEY AND OTHERS OF THEIR KIND ENJOY HUNTING US...THE FLAMES DO NOT STOP THEM SINCE THE BEASTS ARE NOT SOLID...

BUT THE CREVASSES...THEY GIVE US PLACES TO HIDE.

THE CREVASSES ARE DANGEROUS, TOO...BUT NOT AS MUCH AS THE *BEASTS*.

IF THE BEASTS HAD COME WITHOUT YOU... WE WOULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR FRIEND WITH US DOWN ONE...

SURELY NOT...BETTER TO STAND AND FIGHT...

OH, YES, THAT'S A *FAR* BETTER CHOICE FOR YOU AGAINST THEM! HMMPH!

PERHAPS I CAN PROVIDE A MORE *PRACTICAL* SOLUTION.

I'LL GO AND *TALK* TO THEM.

TYR! YOU WERE JUST BETRAYED BY ONE! WHY GO SEEK OUT SUCH DUPLICITOUS CREATURES?

THOUGH WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR AN END TO THEIR THREAT, THE RISK AND THE CHANCES AGAINST SUCCESS ARE TOO GREAT...

THAT'LL BE MY CONCERN, NOT YOURS! IF I FAIL, IT WON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO YOU.

ALL I ASK FROM YOU IS WHAT YOU KNOW OF THEM AND WHERE I MIGHT FIND THEIR LAIRS.

WHAT DO WE KNOW? *LITTLE.* THEY SUDDENLY APPEARED. THEY ATTACKED ANYTHING THEY CAME UPON...

THERE SEEMED NO REASON FOR WHAT THEY DID...

LIKE CHILDREN LOST AND LASHING OUT...

"CHILDREN," INDEED! TYRI, THEY ARE *MONSTERS!* THEY ARE—

DRAGONS?

I DID NOT MEAN THAT...

IS THAT ALL YOU KNOW OF THEM? DID YOU NEVER TRY TO FIGHT BACK, HUNT THEM DOWN?

THOUGH WE ARE MISSHAPEN, DO NOT THINK US COWARDS! YES, WHEN THEY FIRST APPEARED, WE SOUGHT THEIR LAIRS.

TEN OF US WENT... WE JOURNEYED FAR... WITH PLANS...

...AND ONLY THREE RETURNED.

STRANGE AND TERRIBLE... WERE THE THINGS WE *SAW*...

YOU'RE NOT COWARDS--I UNDERSTAND THAT. NOW TELL ME THE MOST *IMPORTANT THING*...DID YOU FIND THEIR *LAIRS*?

YES...WE FOUND THEM. MUCH GOOD IT DID US. WE...FOUND THEM WHERE WE EXPECTED TO FIND THEM...

AND THAT... WAS WHERE THE *OTHERS DIED*...

AND WHERE YOU, TOO, MAY. FOR OF ALL THE FOUL PLACES OF OUTLAND--AND THERE ARE MANY--FEW COMPARE...

"--TO THE BLADE'S EDGE MOUNTAINS."

CHAPTER FOUR
BLADE'S EDGE

Again the demons returned
e to the vicinity

Death reaped a great
harvest on both sides.

THRASH
A BLEEDY FACE
FROM WHICH

...AND OF WHICH JORAD MACE WOULD HAVE BEEN GREATLY CONCERNED...

...IF HE AND TYRI HAD BEEN NEAR THERE...AND IF NOT FOR ANOTHER, MORE IMMEDIATE, MATTER...

SOMETHING EATS AT YOU, MY LA--TYRI. SOMETHING BEYOND SEARCHING FOR THESE OTHER DRAGONS...

DON'T SEEK TO READ ONE OF MY KIND AS YOU WOULD YOURS!

MY APOLOGIES FOR INTRUDING...

THIS ANGER IS NOT NORMAL FOR HER... WHAT DISTURBS HER SO MUCH?

IT'S A HABIT THAT COULD GET YOU HURT ONE DAY...!

WELL, WARRITH? IS THERE ANY OTHER REASON TO DELAY? I COULD'VE BEEN IN THE AIR AND HALFWAY TO THESE MOUNTAINS YOU SPOKE OF BY NOW!

AND IF YOU HAD, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT YOU WOULD BE DEAD, DRAGON OR NOT.

A SAFE. PATH TO THE BLADE'S EDGE MOUNTAINS IS IMPOSSIBLE TO EXPLAIN!

AND FOR *THAT* I'VE BEEN WAITING ALL THIS TIME? THAT?!

HE ONLY WISHES TO HELP US.

AND HELP YOU I WILL, IN THE ONE WAY POSSIBLE.

I WILL BE YOUR *GUIDE.*

I STILL *PROTEST* THIS DECISION, FATHER!

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO ACCOMPANY US...

THERE IS EVERY NEED! THERE IS NO ARGUMENT. IF YOU WISH TO SAFELY REACH THE NETHER DRAKES...THEN I AM YOUR BEST HOPE.

I MUST MAKE AMENDS FOR MY SUSPICIONS ABOUT THE TWO OF YOU...

...AND FOR MY FAILURE TO MY COMRADES THE LAST TIME.

VERY WELL! WHATEVER MUST BE DONE!

JUST SO LONG AS IT MEANS THAT WE CAN *FINALLY* DEPART!

WELL? HURRY UP OR I'LL LEAVE WITHOUT YOU!

AND MAKE CERTAIN YOU HOLD ON TIGHT! I PLAN TO MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME!

WE MUST AVOID THE HELLFIRE CITADEL! VEER TO YOUR RIGHT

THE BLADE'S EDGE MOUNTAINS...THE HELLFIRE CITADEL...IS THERE NO PLACE IN OUTLAND THAT SPEAKS OF PEACE?

VERY FEW. PEACE IS NOT SOMETHING OUR WORLD HAS TRULY KNOWN FOR DECADES.

PERHAPS...PERHAPS IN THAT RESPECT OUR WORLDS ARE NOT SO *DIFFERENT* AFTER ALL.

As promised, Warrith guided them along the safest path toward the Blade's Edge Mountains.

Drop the conversation, they noted.

...were reminders enough that nowhere were they truly free of danger.

WE ARE HERE... THE BLADE'S EDGE MOUNTAINS. NOW WE MUST TRULY BEWARE...

SUCH A DESOLATE PLACE...I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK OR SENSE I GET OF IT...

AS WELL YOU SHOULD NOT. DEATH HERE COMES IN A THOUSAND MONSTROUS FORMS...

ODD...I FEEL AS IF...

...I NEED TO DESCEND...

DO SO WITH ALL GREAT CAUTION. ESPECIALLY IN THIS PLACE...

WHAT IS IT, WARRITH?

WHAT IS THAT?

BONES? THEY ALMOST LOOK LIKE--

THEY ARE! THEY ARE BONES!

THE BONES OF A DRAGON?!

WE MUST LEAVE! *NOW!*

I WILL NOT LEAVE! WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF THESE, WARRITH? THEY ARE DRAGON BONES AND I SENSE THAT THEY--

SHOULD NOT COME!

IT IS A GRONN...! HE MUST HAVE SEEN US IN THE SKY!

QUICKLY! *FLY!* FLY BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

WHA' IMPUDENCE IS THIS?!

THUMP

[illegible]

GET--AWAY--
FROM ME!!

KEEP ATOP ME! THEY'RE TOO LARGE FOR EITHER OF YOU TO FIGHT IF YOU FALL!

TAKE TO THE AIR!

OH, I WILL...IN A MOMENT!

ZZZZZZZZZZKKKKK

BUT THAT HARDLY MEANS I'M DONE WITH THESE BRUTES YET!

WE ARE FREE OF THEM! WE SHOULD JUST MOVE ON!

OH, NO! THEY HAVEN'T LEARNED THEIR LESSON!

THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENING WITH YOUR FRIEND! A DEEP ANGER...

THE GOBLIN ARE MERELY THE FOCUS FOR THE MOMENT OF THAT ANGER.

I WILL BE TREATED WITH RESPECT!

THAT SHOULD HOLD YOU WELL ENOUGH!

THAT'LL MAKE ANY OTHER OF THEIR KIND THINK TWICE ABOUT ATTACKING DRAGONS... ESPECIALLY BLUE ONES!

THESE ARE ONLY LESSER GRONN! WE MUST MOVE ON BEFORE ONE OF GRUUL'S CHILDREN COME!

BE WARNED! A HUNDRED GRONN ARE NOTHING COMPARED TO *ONE* OF *THEM!*

I THINK YOU EXAGGERATE...BUT VERY WELL...

MORE THAN EVER, I WANT TO FIND THE NETHER DRAKES.

PERHAPS THEY KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THESE DRAGON BONES... UNLESS YOU CAN TELL US MORE, WARRITH?

I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THEM. THEY WERE BONES WHEN FIRST I SAW THEM.

I DID NOT EVEN THINK OF THEM AS OF YOUR KIND...UNTIL NOW.

THE BLACK DRAGONS DO NOTHING WITHOUT EVIL PURPOSE IN MIND...

IF THEY'RE UP TO SOMETHING HERE, I MUST FIND OUT!

IT MIGHT BE BEST IF WE SOUGHT HELP FROM YOUR KIND, TYR!

I CAN HANDLE THIS! WE NEED NO ONE ELSE!

AS YOU SAY, TYR.

WHAT AILS HER?

BEST TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT...

VERY WELL...

MISTRESS DRAGON! THERE ARE MORE DANGERS AHEAD. FORTUNATELY, WE STAY FAR TO THE SOUTH OF DEATH'S DOOR... WHERE THE DEMONS STILL COMMAND..

IS THERE NO PLACE IN OUTLAND THAT IS NOT DANGEROUS?

NONE. EAST OF DEATH'S DOOR IS VEKHAAR STAND. THE GLADE HOUSES MOK'NATHAL VILLAGE...

THEY ARE HALF-ORC, HALF-OGRE... AND ARE BITTER ENEMIES OF ALL DRANEI, HAVING HUNTED US ALL BUT TO *EXTINCTION.*

HMMPH! PERHAPS WITH THE HORDE, YES, BUT NOT US!

WE KNOW LITTLE MORE ABOUT THE MOUNTAINS. THEY ARE NOT FOR THE BROKEN.

AS I SADLY *LEARNED.*

THE NETHER DRAKES! THEY SHOULD BE THERE!

WARRITH, WHY'VE WE NOT SEEN ANY THUS FAR? CAN THEY ALL BE IN THEIR LAIRS? ARE THEY AFRAID OF THE GRONN?

I HAVE NO ANSWER! WE HAVE SEEN FEWER LATELY. THE TWO YOU MET, THEY WERE THE MOST KNOWN TO US

THAT MAGIC SNARE THAT TRAPPED YOU! COULD *IT* BE THE REASON?

THE THOUGHT HAD OCCURRED TO ME! AND NOW I WONDER IF THE BLACK DRAGONFLIGHT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH ITS MAKING!

WHETHER OR NOT THEY DID, IF IT IS THE CAUSE, SURELY YOU MUST ALSO BE CAREFUL!

HAHAHA! I WAS CAUGHT UNAWARE LAST TIME I KNOW NOW I FEEL WHAT ENERGIES IT HAS! I'VE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM IT ANYMORE_

WE ARE GETTING NEAR! THE NETHER DRAKES NEST OVER TH--

NO! YOU SHOULD NOT BE HERE!

VALOKU! WE HAVE COME AS FRIENDS! WE WISH TO HELP YOU--

UNNGH!!

YOU CAN DO NOTHING FOR US...

...AND NOTHING FOR YOURSELF.

CHAPTER FIVE

BLOOD UPON THE BLADES

TYR!!! TO THE RIGHT!!

WELL, LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT MORE COMPANY!

PRPAW

PRPAW

CAN WE OUTRUN THEM?

YOU WANT ME TO FLEE RATHER THAN FIGHT? FROM THOSE LITTLE GNATS? WHY?!

BESIDES, WE MAY LEARN SOMETHING OF VALUE...FROM THE ONE I LET LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO SPEAK!

HA! THE ARROGANCE! IT DOESN'T MATTER THE COLOR...

ALL DRAGONS ARE THE SAME

SHE IS TOO RECKLESS!! THERE IS SOMETHING PRESSING AT HER *MIND!!*

SHE SEEMS DETERMINED TO PROVE SOMETHING...EVEN AT COST OF *ALL OUR LIVES!!*

FWOOM

FWOOM

AAAAH!!

NOW! USE THE DEVICE NOW!

TYR! BREAK AWAY! THEY'VE SOME TRICK IN MIND!

NO! I WON'T LEAVE! I HAVE COMMAND OF THIS SITUATION!

TYR!! BEWARE!
WHAT OF IT? I KNOW ITS POWER! THIS TIME, IT WILL CAUSE ME NO HARM!

RAAAH!!!

FWIIKSSS

SSSSSSSSSS

YOU SEE? GREATLY IMPROVED, AS PROMISED!

NO! NOT A--

THERE IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT! A-A THIN SILVER COIL!

IT'S STRONGER-- STRONGER THAN BEFORE!! I CAN'T BREAK ITS SPELL!!

HOLD ON, WARRITH!!

RRRRARRRR!!

THE MAGIC EMANATES FROM IT!

IF WE CAN SOMEHOW REMOVE IT...!!

HOLD ME IN PLACE AS BEST YOU CAN! I MUST USE BOTH HANDS!

BE CAREFUL!

LET...GO!!

NYAAAAAAH!!

NO! WE'VE NO OTHER HOPE!!

SHE HAS NO OTHER HOPE!!

IF ONLY I COULD STILL WIELD THE LIGHT! PLEASE... JUST FOR A MOMENT...LET ME BE WORTHY AGAIN! FOR HER... NOT FOR ME!

JUST FOR A MOMENT--

UNNGH!!

AAAH!!

THUD

THUD

THUD

THWOMP

THWOMP

UNNNF UH

RRRAWK

WOOOSH

AWAY FROM HER!

V...VALOKU?

WARRITH! ARE YOU--

GYAAAAH!!

SLASH

!!!

NO WAMMIES—!

RRRAWK

PLEASE...! I KNOW I AM NOT WORTHY...

THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
NGH...!
MUST...K-KEEP FIGHTING...

NO!!

THUNK

DAMN YOU!

NO! I THINK... I CAN SAVE YOU...!!

IT IS... T-TOO LATE FOR M-ME...

DO NOT WORRY ABOUT M-ME!

SQUISH

RAAAAH!!

WARRITH!!

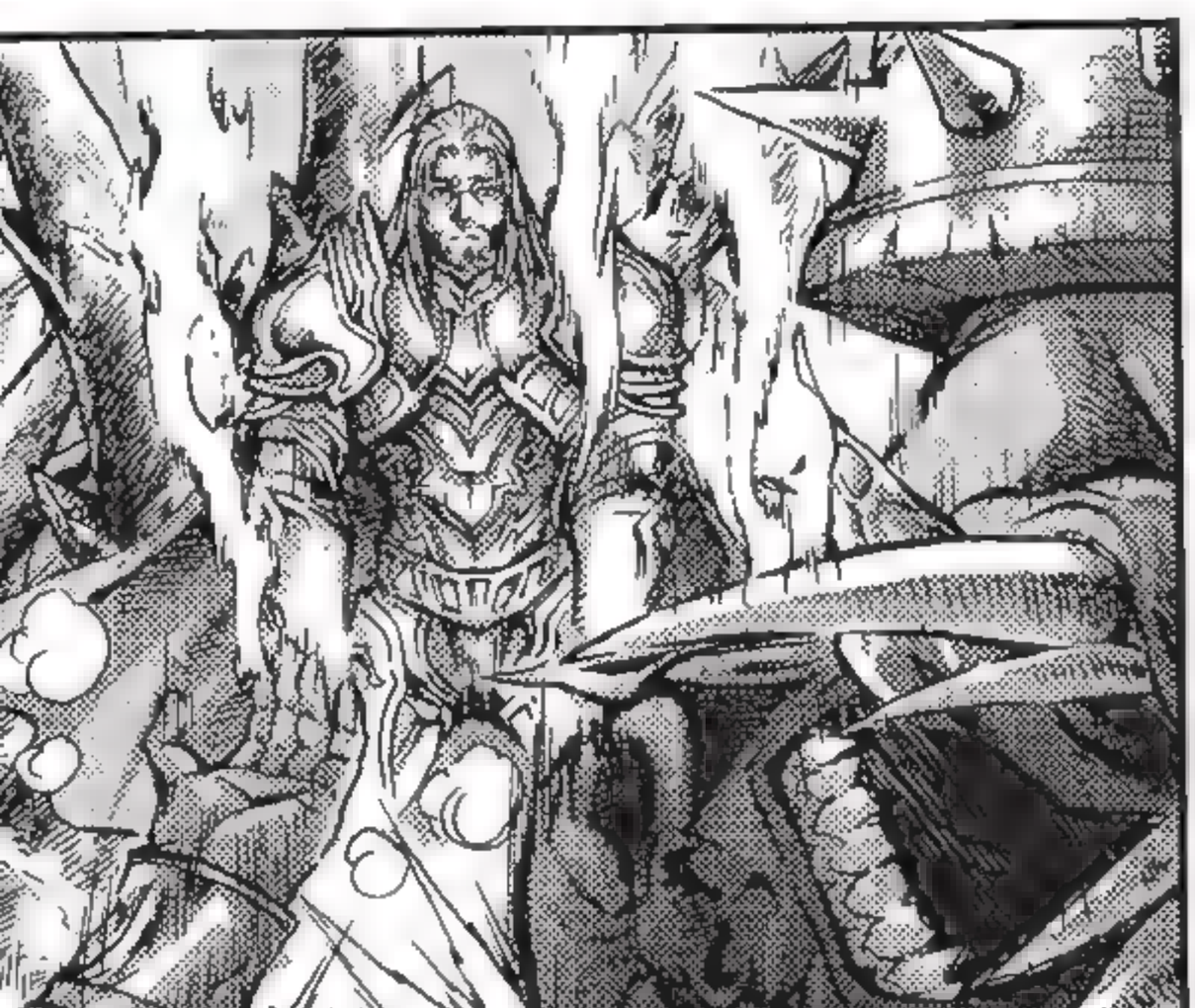
NO!!

NO...I COULD HAVE HEALED YOU, WARRITH...THE LIGHT...THE LIGHT HAS RETURNED TO ME...

YES...THE LIGHT HAS FOUND ME WORTHY AGAIN...

FOR YOU... *WARRITH!!*

FOOOOM



THE MOUNTAIN OBSCURES OUR REMAINING RIDERS, BUT NO MATTER...WE KNOW THAT THE BLUE DRAGON IS LOST TO US.

ANOTHER FAILURE ON THE PART OF YOUR OFFERINGS, ETHEREAL.

I'M CONSIDERING ENDING OUR BUSINESS ARRANGMENTS...AND YOU AS WELL.

BUT THERE WAS NOTHING *WRONG* WITH THE DEVICE!

ITS UNIQUE SNARE DESIGN WAS PERFECT FOR DEALING WITH A DRAGON OF SUCH PHYSICAL AND EVEN MAGICAL PROPORTIONS!

THE POWERFUL COIL SHOULD HAVE SAPPED HER OF HER *STRENGTH OF WILL!*

THEN, WHERE IS MY PRIZE? WHERE ARE MY TRIUMPHANT WARRIORS?

YOU SAW THAT LIGHT...THAT HOLY LIGHT... UNLEASHED...WE'VE BOTH SEEN THE PALADINS FROM AZEROTH USE IT...

ONE OF HER RIDERS WAS CLEARLY A PALADIN AND SUMMONED THAT POWER... THOUGH SINCE HE NO DOUBT FELL TO HIS DEATH, WE NO LONGER NEED TO CONCERN OURSELVES WITH HIM...

"FELL TO HIS DEATH"? ARE YOU SURE?

OF COURSE!

THEN, IT'LL BE INTERESTING TO SEE JUST WHY ONLY ONE OF THE PATROL THAT WAS OUT IS NOW RETURNING...

... AND WHY HE DOES NOT BEAR THE DEVICE.

WHERE ARE THE REST AND WHERE IS THE DEVICE?

A NETHER DRAGON TOOK THE BLUE...MY MOUNT PANICKED AND THE DEVICE FELL...

THE OTHERS WENT IN HUNT OF THE HUMAN WHO CAST THE LIGHT...AND THE BROKEN WHO HELPED HIM...

AND THE FAIR SLAUGHTERED THE REST OF YOUR PATROL?

YES..BUT THEY PERISHED ALSO...

DID YOU SEE THAT HAPPEN? ARE THE PALADIN AND THE BROKEN TRULY DEAD?

YES...THEY ARE...D-DEAD...

YOU SPOKE THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PALADIN'S POWER AFTER ALL, ETHEREAL. IT MUST'VE BEEN THE REASON FOR THE DEVICE'S FAILURE.

A PITY THAT THE DEVICE WAS LOST...AS I SAID, IT WAS UNIQUE...

YES...A PITY...IN MANY WAYS...

MMNG!

COWARDICE AND FAILURE HAVE NO PLACE IN MY EMPIRE TO COME...

NOR DO LIES AND OMISSIONS TO ME.

HEED THAT WELL, KADAVAN... AND TAKE THIS LITTLE REMINDER, TOO.

GAAAH!!

DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?

MY...MY WARES WON'T F-FAIL YOU, DEATH KNIGHT...AND, IN FACT, *HAVEN'T* FAILED YOU...WHEN ALL THE NECESSARY K-KNOWLEDGE IS AVAILABLE...

YOU'VE MORE THAN AMPLE PROOF ABOVE...

"...AND MORE THAN AMPLE POWER, EVEN WITHOUT THE DEVICE...AND THE BLUE DRAGON...TO MAKE OUTLAND *YOURS*."

CHAPTER SIX

SHADOW'S LEGACY

RARRR!

THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE MASTER OF THE NETHER DRAGONS!

KROOM

RARRRR!!

YHHIGGGG!!

YHHIGGGG!

RRRAUGH!!

RAARRGH!!

FINISH THIS QUICKLY! WITH THE BLUE DRAGON MISSING AND DRAGONMAW CLAN'S NETHER DRAGONS UNDER MY CONTROL, I NEED WAIT NO LONGER!!

WE WILL TAKE THE PORTAL...

...AND THUS CONTROL ALL ACCESS BETWEEN OUTLAND AND AZEROTH...THE NEXT STEP IN THE CREATION OF MY EMPIRE!!

THE MAGICAL TRACES ARE UNMISTAKABLE! THIS CAN ONLY BE ANOTHER OF THE BLACK DRAGONS... LIKE THE ONE IMPALED...ONE OF MONSTROUS DEATHWING'S DRAGONFLIGHT...

BUT WHAT HAS DEATHWING THE DESTROYER AND HIS LIEUTENANTS HERE? WHAT WERE HIS SERVANTS WILLING TO DIE FOR TO PROTECT?

FOR WHAT REASON WOULD THE MALEVOLENT ONE SPREAD HIS EVIL TO OUTLAND?

MMMM...THE BLACK DRAGON DEATHWING IS DEAD... SO WHATEVER HAPPENED IS LIKELY SOMETHING OF NO MORE CONCERN.

BESIDES...I SUPPOSE I SHOULD SEE TO JORAD... AND MAKE SURE THEY HAVE NOT NEED OF ME.

THE ENTRANCE IT MUST BE THIS...

WHERE IS IT--?

FWISS

HIDING THE WAY OUT? AS IF AN ILLUSION COULD STAND AGAINST THE MAGIC OF A BLUE DRAGON!

NOTHING?! SOME BLACK DRAGON SPELL-- MAYBE THAT OF DEATHWING HIMSELF--HAS WEAKENED MY OWN POWER--

STILL THAT WON'T BE ENOUGH TO STOP ME!

SCRAPE

THWUMP

FWAM

WE'LL JUST SEE!!!

FEEDBACK

!!!

HMMM?

KLAK

KLAK

KLAK

VALOKU?

THE CORRIDOR IS TOO SMALL FOR MY TRUE FORM...

VALOKU BROUGHT ME HERE FOR A REASON... WHATEVER IT IS MUST BE THAT DIRECTION.

VERY WELL...LET'S SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT...

ELSEWHERE...WARRITH'S PEOPLE ANXIOUSLY AWAIT THEIR LEADER'S RETURN.

SOME MORE THAN OTHERS...

!!!

PALADIN! WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHERE IS MY FATHER?!

WARRITH IS *DEAD*. HE DIED PROTECTING *ME*.

DEAD?! I *KNEW* THIS WOULD HAPPEN! *HOW?!*

WE WERE ATTACKED BY FEL ORCS ASTRIDE STRANGE FLYING CREATURES! WARRITH AND I LOST OUR SEATING AND THOUGH WE FELL SAFELY ONTO A MOUNTAINSIDE...

...SOME OF THE FEL ORCS CAME FOR US! YOUR FATHER TOOK HIS FOE WITH HIM OVER THE EDGE.

I TAKE *RESPONSIBILITY.* I SHOULD HAVE KEPT HIM FROM *HARM.*

THIS IS YOUR FAULT! *SEIZE HIM!*

HE WOULD NOT HAVE DIED IF HE HAD *STAYED,* PALADIN!!

I DO NOT BLAME YOU, VALWAR, BUT YOU MUST LISTEN--

MY FATHER... IS DEAD. THERE'S NO MORE *REASON* TO *LISTEN.*

AND NO MORE REASON...TO KEEP YOU ALIVE...

TOSS HIM IN THE *PIT!* I WILL DECIDE HIS METHOD OF *DEATH.*

VALWAR! YOU MUST HEED ME!!

DRAGONMAW FORTRESS, WHERE THE BATTLE HAS LONG ENDED...

MY VICTORY IS COMPLETE. YOUR MASTER, ZULUHED, AND SOME OF YOUR COMRADES MAY STILL BE ON THE LOOSE, BUT THEY WILL BE HUNTED DOWN LIKE THE VERMIN THAT THEY ARE ONCE ALL OF OUTLAND IS MINE.

AS FOR YOU... YOU LIVE BECAUSE YOU HAVE VALUE TO ME.

BUT DISOBEY ME... AND YOU'LL JOIN YOUR FRIENDS THERE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT OF US?

WE RIDE NEXT TO TAKE THE PORTAL. YOU MAY JOIN IN VICTORY... OR DIE HERE IN ABJECT DEFEAT.

A GREAT VICTORY IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN IGNOBLE DEATH...

THEN, IF YOU ARE TRULY LOYAL, YOU'LL TRULY BE REWARDED.

BUT, IF YOU ONLY THINK TO BIDE YOUR TIME...

...THERE ARE FAR, FAR WORSE THINGS THAN A SWIFT DEATH. SAY SOMETHING MUCH MORE LINGERING...

SOMETHING EATING AWAY INSIDE SLOWLY...

SUCH AS ONE'S INNARDS FESTERING, DECAYING, AT JUST A PACE TO KEEP LIFE GOING THROUGH THE WORST OF THE AGONY.

HAVE I MADE MYSELF CLEAR ENOUGH YET?

I SWEAR WE WILL SERVE UNTO DEATH...

NO...NOT DEATH...

DESTINY.

I HAVE GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT...

FEL ORCS NEAR THE MOUNTAINS...ASTRIDE ROUND, FLYING CREATURES...THEY COULD BE NETHER RAYS.

THE DEATH KNIGHT... *RAGNOK BLOODREAVER*... THIS IS HIS DOING.

MY FATHER'S DEATH... OUR LEADER'S DEATH... IS ON *HIS* HANDS... NOT *YOURS*.

PLEASE, VALWAR! THERE IS MORE I WANTED TO TELL YOU! ABOUT THE DRAGON--

YES... WHERE IS YOUR DRAGON?

SHE DOES NOT ANSWER TO ME, VALWAR! BUT I FEAR SHE'S IN GREAT DANGER! THE LAST I KNEW OF HER, SHE WAS INJURED...I KNOW NOT WHERE SHE LANDED...

AS FOR HOW I CAME TO BE HERE, SOMETHING I WISHED TO TELL YOU EARLIER... THE ANSWER IS THAT A DRAGON BROUGHT ME HERE, YES...

...BUT IT WAS ONE OF THE TWO NETHER DRAGONS WHO HAD EARLIER CONFRONTED US.

" AND FLEW WITHOUT ANY WORD OF EXPLANATION BACK IN THIS DIRECTION."

WHUMP

LONG ENOUGH.

WITH THAT SAID, HE FLEW OFF TOWARDS THE MOUNTAINS...

FORGET THE OTHER... FORGET HER... LOOK TO YOUR OTHER FRIENDS, LITTLE ONE— FOR THEY, TOO, WILL SOON ENOUGH KNOW DOOM—

WHAT DID THE BEAST MEAN? AND WHY WOULD HE SAVE YOU?

I DO NOT KNOW. ALL THAT MATTERS TO ME IS FINDING TYRI--

VALWAR! VALWAR!

SCOUTS--THEY SEND WORD! DRAGONMAW FORTRESS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAINS FALLS TO RAGNOK!

WE MUST MAKE READY! *THIS WAY!*

RAGNOK'S FORCES WILL SURELY BE COMING FOR US NEXT!!

NO...I DON'T THINK SO. I THINK THEY'LL HEAD *BEYOND* YOU... TO WHERE THE ALLIANCE AND THE HORDE ARE CAMPED.

"AND TO THE *PORTAL.*"

THIS PASSAGE WINDS IN CIRCLES...AND SOME DEEP MAGIC...WITH THE TAINT OF BLACK DRAGON...PERMEATES EVERY STONE..

EVEN MY STRONGEST SPELLS CAN'T PENETRATE THE BLACK DRAGON MAGIC KEEPING ME FROM FINDING MY WAY OUT!

WHY SO MUCH EFFORT? SO MANY SAFEGUARDS?

NOW WHERE?

LET'S SEE IF I CAN'T NARROW MY CHOICES...

KRAKL

KRAKL

KRAKL

THE THIRD PASSAGE...THAT SEEMS THE MOST PROMISING...

FWOOSH

THERE! THERE'S THE END ALREADY...A LARGE CHAMBER_

THIS CHAMBER SURELY MUST HOLD THE REASON VALOKU BROUGHT ME--

--HERE...

EGGS... SCORES OF EGGS. BLACK DRAGON EGGS...BUT SOME ARCANE MAGIC OR ENERGY PERMEATES THEM...AND LOOKS TO HAVE ALTERED THEIR VERY SUBSTANCE_

THEY WERE CLEARLY STORED HERE TO KEEP THEM SAFE.

BUT THOUGH DEATHWING EVIDENTLY NEVER CAME BACK...THE EGGS...MOST OF THE EGGS... FINALLY HATCHED...

BUT SO MANY BLACK DRAGONS SHOULD BE NOTICEABLE...

BUT WAIT! THERE'S SOMETHING **ELSE** I FEEL... SOMETHING INHERENT IN THE ALTERED EGGS' SUBSTANCE. IT'S SO FAMILIAR...

NO...

IT CAN'T BE. BUT IT MAKES THE ONLY SENSE...IT BEARS TRACES OF THE SAME SORT OF ENERGY THAT I FELT FROM THEM...

THESE EGGS... NETHER DRAGONS EMERGED FROM THESE EGGS...

THE NETHER DRAGONS...ARE THE VERY SPAWN OF **DEATHWING!**

To Be Concluded...

DEATH

E E
M R
P I